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THE FAIREST GIFT.

If I might give the world one gift,
And choose it as I pleased; if through
Some miracle 'twere mine to lift
A hand and thereby set a new
Condition over men, I would not strew
Before them riches that they seek to-day,
I would not be induced to sweep away
One task that God has given them to do.

I would not make the dark days fair,
Nor curb the bitter winds that blow,
Nor deck the streams with lilies where
The angry, muddy waters flow;
I would not bring the lordly master low,
Nor raise the servant up who cringes now,
He that is plowing still should guide the plow,
Tears still should wash away the widow's woe.

I would not heed his bitter cry
Who calls upon the poor to wrest
From them whose palace walls are high
Gold for the starving and oppressed,
But he that has within his honest breast
The fear that Wrong is spreading here below
I would with glad conviction give to know
That God's world still is rising to its best.

—S. E. Kiser, in Chicago Record-Herald.

FOILED BY A VIOLIN.

H. J. TEMPLE HILL (NELHAR.)

We were rushing along in a Pullman on one of the Indian railways, Bob Stevens, Jack Trelawney and myself, going home on furlough, and jolly glad to escape the baking hot and tiresome climate of India. We dashed along through the wild jungle; then past some native villages, simmering in the heat. By and by we reached a rather more different piece of country, and in a distant clearing a small half-ruined temple was seen.

Bob Stevens shuddered and said: "I can never look at that temple without shuddering, as I had an experience there that deepened my first bad impression of Indian character, and priests especially."

"Spin us a yarn, old man," and Trelawney filled up the glasses.

"Well, as it is somewhat of a relief to me, I will. Take a good look at the temple," and we all looked at it, eagerly and attentively. It was an ordinary type of Indian temple, partly in ruins, dark and dismal, and of smaller size than usual.

"You remember the state of unrest that prevailed up in that region in 18—," began Stevens, "and how that fanatic, Rham Sing, was continually stirring up the natives to rebellion. He ran foul of Col. Watcher, and since then vowed that the vengeance of the Buddha should dog his footsteps. Well, one night, or evening rather, Brisbane and myself received some important dispatches from Col. Watcher, whose daughter had been kidnaped the night before, and were instructed to ride with all speed to Maj. McDonald, who was encamped at K——, deliver dispatches and ask him to join in the search for the girl, as the colonel was nearly distracted. We left at about ten p. m., riding fast, and shortly afterwards the moon came out in all her silvery beauty, making it almost as light as day. We were neither of us inclined to talk, so barring an occasional remark, we proceeded in silence.

"After a long interval we heard the faint sounds of a violin being played. It was wonderful and remarkably strange, but unmistakable. Brisbane said: 'By jove, who the devil's playing a violin here?' You must remember that the whole country was greatly excited, and that no European was at all safe then. We pricked up our ears, and hurried our horses, and as we approached nearer the sounds, a small native temple came into view, the music grew louder, and we recognized one of Strauss' tenderest waltzes. 'It's in the temple,' I ventured to remark, and halting our horses we dismounted cautiously to reconnoiter. We managed, by pulling ourselves up with our hands, to have a peep inside, and what we saw made our blood freeze. Inside, where the moonbeams fell, all was bright and clear, which served only to accentuate the darker recesses of the gloomy place. In the center of the floor, upon a slab of white marble, about a foot high, stood a lovely European girl clothed in white and playing her violin, never ceasing. Around her, gently swaying to the rhythm of the music, were snakes innumerable, large and small, principally cobras. As they swayed back and forth, up and down, in their shiny, lissom black and yellow skins, the bright moonlight tinged them all, as it were, with fire, and made their wicked little eyes and tongues scintillate and sparkle again. Such was the sight that rewarded our curiosity. I whispered to Brisbane as soon as I could speak, then said in a clear voice to the girl: 'Keep on playing, help is near.' The young musician started, nodded her head, and still kept the music rolling off her violin and floating through the arches of the temple, while the dancers of death kept up their dance.

"'It's that fiendly priest, Rham Sing's work, I'll bet my rations,' muttered Brisbane, as we dropped to the ground. 'One thing is certain,' I remarked, 'if the music stops, she is doomed. As long as that continues the cobras will not touch her.'

"'How to rescue her, that's the problem,' said Brisbane. 'By the roof. Come, we'll make a rope of our stirrup leathers,' I replied, and we hurried to our horses. We speedily had a rope, made of all the harness that we could possibly use; then writing a note for urgent and immediate help, stuck it in my saddle and started both horses swiftly back to our headquarters. It was then one p. m. If our horses went straight back they would reach camp in less than three hours, and we could count upon assistance arriving three or four hours after.

"There was only one place where we could get up on the roof, and only one could get up at a time. It was hard and dangerous work. The stonework was quite irregular, being partly ruined, which, however, rendered our ascent somewhat easier. Eventually we reached the roof, and clambering over the rest of the irregularities got to the window or slit in the center, and immediately beneath which was our object.

"Lullabies of Schumann were varied by gavottes and waltzes by Strauss, and occasionally a march by Godfrey, and had it not been for the horrible danger to the player inside the weird scene would have enthralled us," and Stevens took a long draught. We said nothing, and he proceeded.

"Fortunately for us, the place was crumbling and in a state of decay, or we could never have done what we did. After some hard work we managed to enlarge the aperture in the roof right over the girl's head, until we felt sure it was large enough to pass a human being through. I then leant over the hole and told her in clear and distinct tones what we meant to do to rescue her. She looked up mutely and nodded, still keeping up the bewitching music and still holding the yellow and black skinned serpents enchanted and spell-bound.

"Brisbane had by this time a good slip-knot made at the end of our improvised line, and was tying one end of it to a projection on the roof. 'Twas then that we heard natives shouting in the distance.

"'We've no time to lose,' said Brisbane, as I quickly took the rope and lowered it through the opening, carefully dropping the noose over the girl's shoulders. Instantly she dropped her violin, pushed the noose further down her body and clung to the rope, while we at the top gave a long, steady haul, which brought our precious burden hanging in mid-air seven or eight feet above the whirling, seething mass of snakes, who, now that the spell had been broken, were darting at the marble slab and the girl's violin. Another long haul and our young lady was just beneath the hole, and we gently pulled her through and on to the roof, where, true to the tradition of her sex, she promptly fainted.

"The natives were coming nearer, and a few had already collected outside the temple and were showing signs of excitement. We laid our burden down and I gave her a lavish dose of my brandy flask. We had our revolvers, and meant to give the natives some stiff work before they captured us, and, of course, we had good hopes of being rescued ourselves before that transpired. The girl soon revived under my ministrations, and we made her as comfortable as was possible under the circumstances. She was a decidedly pretty girl, blue eyes, golden hair and all that sort of thing, and the beggars who had put her in the temple had taken most of her clothes, thus leaving her more exposed to the bites of the reptiles. It was a trifle embarrassing, as we had never met before, though Brisbane whispered to me that it was the colonel's lost daughter. He knew her by sight.

"Meanwhile the natives, being stirred up by that arch-villain, Rham Sing, were crowding round the temple, and gazing up at us with no very friendly looks. I could see the old fiend, with his ghastly face and priestly garments, inflaming the crowd to attack us, which they shortly did; a few shots rung out, and we heard some bullets go whizzing past. Brisbane and I fired simultaneously at Rham Sing, but whether it was owing to the uncertain light, or his having a charmed life, I don't know; anyway, we both missed him, and were rewarded by a malignant glare from him, divided between our two selves and the girl, and a volley of bullets which pattered all about us, hitting nothing but the stonework.

"Matters were getting interesting, when to our straining ears was borne the familiar and then jolly welcome sound of cavalry dashing along and accoutrements rattling, and, with a hearty cheer, a squadron of our cavalry, led by Col. Watcher himself, charged into the open space and into the remnant of natives, who had deferred to make their escape upon the first alarm. We stood up and waved our helmets, and it wasn't long before we were all down beside the colonel. Brisbane and I looked the other way and talked when the colonel met his child, but a minute or two afterwards he called us over to him and introduced her as his daughter, Miss Evelyn Watcher, who now, I am glad to say, is Mrs. Bob Stevens," and he looked radiantly happy.

"What became of Rham Sing, though?" asked Trelawney.

"Oh, he escaped; went north, I believe, and, as far as I know, is living yet."

"And the snakes?"

"Oh, we left them to those who like them. My wife doesn't, neither do I," said Stevens, emphatically.—Canadian Magazine.

IT WAS A FREE GIFT.

Even Then the Squatter Called the Owner Hard Names.

"I bought a piece of land out in North Dakota several years ago," said the man from Pittsburg to a Boston Globe reporter, "and last month, hearing that a squatter had taken possession, I journeyed out there to see what ought to be done in the case.

"I found the family in a sod house and very comfortable. The man acknowledged my claim, but calmly advised me to go to law about it. I went to see a lawyer, and after hearing my statement he said:

"'Yes, the land is yours, and if you authorize me to go ahead I can put you in possession. It will take time, however.'

"'How long?'

"'Well, say five years. These cases move slow. As to the costs, I can't exactly say, but $250 ought to cover it. Then there is the squatter.'

"'What have I got to do with him?'

"'You'll have to pay for the improvements he's made, and he'll probably be able to show $500 worth. Then there'll be the crops.'

"'What crops?'

"Why, the crops he would have put in if you hadn't been trying to dispossess him. He will probably value these at another $500.'

"'Anything more?' I asked, with what was meant to be sarcasm.

"'Well, he will be entitled to have 12 men view the place once a year, and each view will cost you $48.'

"'That's about $800, and I paid only half of that for the farm. In fact, I'd sell it for $350.'

"'Yes?'

"'And as a lawyer what would you advise me to do?'

"'There's only one sensible course for you to pursue,' he replied as he began to write out a receipt. 'Give the man a free deed of the land and hand me $15 in cash for legal advice.'

"It jarred me for a minute," said the Pittsburgher, "but I realized that it was my best way out, and I took it. I felt sorry for the squatter, though. I carried him the deed myself, and when I placed it in his hands he broke down and cried.

"It wasn't for joy, however. By deeding him the land I had stuck him for back taxes amounting to $48, and he rose up and called me a soulless human hyena."

THE BEAST.

Laughed When He Told How Smoothly He Had Worked an Old Game.

"Did you see the doctor to-day, John?"

"Yes, dear."

"What did he say was the matter with you?"

"Nothing much—yet."

"What did he give you?"

"He said medicine was not what I needed."

"Oh, John! What does he want you to do?"

"He recommended rest and quiet, and said I needed only a change of air, food, scene and associates, so I think I will go up the lakes for a week's fishing."

And the beast laughed about it afterward when he told how smoothly he had worked it.—Indianapolis News.

Cure for Bee Stings.

For bee stings salt at all times is a good cure. Sweet oil, pounded mallows or onions, powdered chalk made into a paste with water, or weak ammonia, are also efficacious.

A Definition of Tact.

Tact is a way of getting what you want without letting others know you want it.—Chicago Daily News.

THIS AND THAT.

Kansas reports a population of 1,467,808, an increase of 23,100 over last year.

By October 1 Washington will be receiving its water supply from a new reservoir.

In the last fiscal year $338,263 gold was imported into the United States by way of Maine.

It has been found in world's fairs lasting six months that nearly three-fourths of the attendance occurs in the last three months.

It is noted in the annals of Charlemagne as a great occurrence that he sent a contemporary king a present of two silken gowns as the most valuable gift he could confer.

Out of this country's gold imports for the fiscal year 1901, $37,244,526 came in ore and bullion, and $28,806,661 in coin. Of silver, $30,730,697 came in ore and bullion, $5,653,344 in coin.

The Livingston vault in Trinity churchyard, New York, contains eight caskets, in one of which are the remains of Robert Fulton, the steamboat inventor. Fulton's name is not on the vault, nor is his last resting place marked in any way connected with his individuality or achievements. Fulton married a Miss Livingston. A Fulton monument fund was once started, but was without result.

A NIGHT WITH A CORPSE.

Guest Finds He Has Been Sleeping with a Dead Man.

"I had a harrowing experience in Hot Springs a few years ago," said a gentleman at one of the New Orleans hotels to a Times-Democrat writer, "and I shall never forget just how I felt. It is no pleasant thing, I assure you, to wake up in the morning and find that you have been sleeping with a dead man practically all night. This is what happened to me: I was stopping out at a place called the Bloomington, out on the hillside, some distance from the central portion of the city. There was a Texas judge stopping at the same place, a splendid fellow, and as I was a budding member of the bar I soon got on friendly terms with the judge and we occupied a room together. One night my friend complained a little at the supper table, but did not seem to be very sick. He retired early. I rolled in about eight o'clock. The next morning I got up about six o'clock. I glanced over toward the judge's bed, but paid no particular attention to the situation until after I had gone out into the yard. Reentering the room I again glanced over toward the judge's bed. He was in a cramped position. There was no sign of animation about the body. I called several times. There was no response. I became alarmed. In the next room there was a nervous, half-dead fellow, and we called him California. I told him something was the matter with the judge. He rushed in, grabbed the body excitedly and found that it was as stiff as a dead man ever gets. The judge had been dead all night, and I had been sleeping in the room with the corpse without knowing it. The next night was the most miserable night I ever experienced. I occupied the room with California. Now, California was nearly dead with consumption, and, to be honest about it, I was not looking so well myself. Between California and myself it was a toss-up as to which would pass first. Each, of course, thought the other had a shade the worst of it. I never slept a wink that night. Neither did California. He was afraid if he went to sleep he would wake up and find me dead, and I felt the same about him. We spent the whole night in calling each other."

Mary Williams Montgomery.

Miss Mary Williams Montgomery, who has received the degree of doctor of oriental learning, was born in Turkey 27 years ago. Her mother was Miss Emily Reddington, of Rome, N. Y., and her father Rev. E. R. Montgomery. Both went to Turkey as missionaries under the American board (Congregational). Miss Montgomery lived in Turkey until she was 12 years old, when she came to this country to complete her education. She was graduated from Wellesley college in 1896, and from there went to Germany for a postgraduate course in Berlin university. Miss Montgomery is a sister of George R. Montgomery, professor of philosophy in the Yale divinity school.

A Big Savings Bank.

There is one savings bank in New York city which has deposits of more than $68,000,000, and a surplus of more than $7,000,000.

EMBALMED MILK.

Becoming One of the Serious Problems of the Modern City.

"Embalmed milk is rapidly developing into one of the more serious problems of the modern city," said an observant citizen to a writer for the New Orleans Times-Democrat, "and, judging from the amount of space devoted to the question in agricultural and dairy journals, persons engaged in the dairy business are fully alive to the importance of the matter. I notice that in Chicago the discovery has been made that the milk furnished the public institutions is liberally embalmed with formalin, whatever that is. I do not know exactly the process, and in fact, never heard of embalmed milk until recently. But there seems to be such a thing. The babies, I guess, have more at stake than the grown persons, because of the extensive use of the bottle. Efforts have been making for some time in the larger cities to get purer milk for the babies, and many methods have been resorted to along this line. Doctors advised for awhile that the milk be boiled before using, but it was found that this would not do. Babies were about to starve to death on sterilized milk. It was death by poison on the one hand and death by starvation on the other. But this is simply one of the minor phases of the milk problem. Clean, pure, healthy milk is one of the crying needs of the hour. The public health depends very largely upon a solution of the milk problem. The tuberculous cow, too, must come in for consideration when the milk problem is discussed. I was talking to a veterinary surgeon a few days ago, and he said there was no question about the claim that diseases are frequently transmitted by the use of impure, unwholesome milk. The cow may be in a feverish condition, in which event the disease may be transmitted to the person using the milk. By actual experiment it has been found that ticks transmit fevers from one cow to another, and it is equally as well settled that the unhealthy condition of the cow may be bequeathed to members of the human family who happen to use the milk. Hence the milk problem has become a question of much concern, and physicians and health officers generally throughout the country are making every effort to solve the problem. Pure milk is the demand in all the large cities at present, but what method will finally be hit upon cannot be guessed at this time."

UNCLE SI'S MISTAKE.

Got Into Trouble by Making Display of His Fine Feelings.

"No, Mandy," said Uncle Si, "I'll never try to follow the example of a great man ag'in."

"What's the matter now, Silas?" she asked.

"Well," he said, "while I was up to the city yesterday there was a funeral procession come along. It happened that it passed where Stubbs, the great writer, was standin', an' he took off his hat an' stood with bowed head."

"Well, that showed what fine feelings he has, Silas."

"Course it did, an' the people all said: 'Ain't it beautiful and what a noble man,' an' the mourners in the hacks cried wuss 'an ever. An' it did look purty, so when another percession passed I stepped out in front and took off my hat."

"You blamed fool!"

"Yes, I stepped out an' took off my hat, an' the mourners commenced to laugh an' the little boys throwed stones, an' a big policeman took me down to the jail, where a doctor came in an' asked me how long I had been seein' things an' when I first noticed the severe headaches. They ain't no use talkin', Mandy, you got to git your picters in the papers an' on the cigar box lid before you kin make a public display of your fine feelings an' peculiarities."—Indianapolis Sun.

How to Flatter.

The tribute of unexpected praise is more grateful to a person than the reward for which he works hardest and is most confident. It discovers to him new and pleasing attributes. It has all the zest and relish that the particular always has more than the general. And, besides, for the person who happens to light upon some little favorite trick of individuality and to notice and to comment upon it the reward is great. Such a flatterer is in the heart of the flattered one, throned with the authority of discernment; he is considered forever after as a critic of the first importance. Everyone has a hobby, an idiosyncrasy, visible or invisible; it is the art of the flatterer to discover it and his science to use it to his ends.

BREVITIES OF FUN.

"What do you think of destroying the mosquito with oil?" "Crude, isn't it?"—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

The Man—"Can't I get a short cut through this field?" The Boy—"Yes, if you don't get a long toss from the bull."—Indianapolis News.

Borroughs—"Hello, old man! I'm just back from my vacation—" Phoxy—"Awfully sorry, but I can't do it. I'm borrowing money myself these days."—Philadelphia Record.

"That's good counsel the new preacher gave us," said the deacon. "Which is?" "Love yer neighbor while he sleeps, but watch him while he wakes."—Atlanta Constitution.

May—"Mr. Huggard called on you last evening, didn't he?" Fay—"Yes, and he made me very tired." May—"I suppose he tried to kiss you?" Fay—"Yes, and every time he kissed me I had to slap him."—Philadelphia Press.

Mrs. Housekeep—"Do you really mean to say you are looking for work?" Harvard Hasben—"No, lady, that's neither what I said nor what I meant to say. I said I was looking for employment."—Philadelphia Press.

"Well, this is pretty rough," lamented Mr. Laertes O'Hamme, the eminent actor. "Just as I have succeeded in curing myself of the cigarette habit I am cast in the role of the heavy villain for the whole season."—Baltimore American.

ABSENT-MINDED PROFESSOR.

Carried Off His Brother's Apparel Instead of His Own.

The absent-mindedness of Dr. Alfred Emerson, the archaeologist, formerly of the Johns Hopkins university, and who is now abroad making a collection of antiques for the museum of the University of California, is well known among his Baltimore friends, says the Sun.

The memorable occasion when booked for a public lecture at the Hopkins he let his audience wait in ghastly suspense while he, all unconscious of the engagement, was found busily employed unpacking a box of casts, will long be remembered. His carefully adjusting a fresh collar over one already on, his going to the station and forgetting to take his train, are historic in university lore, but it remains for his friend and colaborer, Mr. Joseph Thatcher Clark, of the British museum, to tell the following story:

The pair were en route to make some important excavations, and had reached southern Europe when Dr. Emerson appeared with an indignant face and a letter from America in his hand. He explained that the letter was from one of his several brothers, accusing him of having absent-mindedly carried off several shirts belonging to the brother when starting abroad.

"To prove how basely false and unjust his suspicions are," said the troubled doctor, "I will get all my shirts and spread them out before you, and see if you can find a single one bearing any initial other than my own."

The shirts, 11 in number, were produced, and consternation followed when they were found to be variously labeled Arthur Hale, G. Emerson, H. Emerson, I. Z., N. F. K. In fact, all except two, these bearing no label at all and presumably Dr. Emerson's, bore initials other than his own.

Hydrography in Japan.

Japan has now, next to the United States, the most completely organized hydrographic office in the world. The government has just received a full set of chart engraving machines similar to those used by the United States coast survey. These instruments were specially prepared in Philadelphia and New York, as were also the 46½-inch spark induction coils for use in wireless telegraphy, made for the Japanese navy. The latter are now in use, and Baron Nishi, naval attache of the Japanese legation, Washington, has said that they are working satisfactorily. They are the most powerful induction coils of the kind ever made.—Japan and America.

Dynamite Guns Obsolete.

The board of ordnance and fortifications has unanimously decided that dynamite gun batteries are obsolete in view of the recent developments in means of defense. This means that we are to have no more of these batteries beyond those now in the service. As a matter of fact, the dynamite gun did not use dynamite for firing high explosives, but wet gun cotton. The experience of past years has distinctly shown that batteries of this kind do not meet the requirements of the service.

CANDID MEN.

A Woman Declares They Use No Tact in Social Affairs.

"Men are dreadfully brusque sometimes," sighed Belinda. "The other night my brother and I went to the house of a friend to a reception. It was a hot night and the house was crowded and there wasn't anything to do but to stand around and talk to the people one could reach, while the people one really wanted to talk with could only be seen at a distance and over a sea of intervening heads. In addition, the croquettes were cold and the ice cream warm, so when we finally got away both my brother and I said: 'Thank Heaven' quite reverently and went to a hotel and had supper.

"The next day all of my friends whom I met asked: 'Didn't you have a lovely time at the Blanks' last night?' and I invariably replied: 'Delightful.' Then we went on our separate ways. When they asked my brother the same question he answered with a frankness that appalled and embarrassed me: 'No, I did not. I had the stupidest time of my life, and, say, they'd better get another chef the next time they entertain, for the supper was awful.'

"'Here,' said Belinda, 'I trace a strong point of difference between men and women. The average girl has too much pride to let it be known that she has gone to an entertainment and has still failed to be entertained. I saw one pretty guileless looking creature sit alone one night at a dance for nine straight dances; then I had compassion on her and sent my escort and a couple of other men to ask her for the remaining two-steps and waltzes. She danced four times in all, yet the next time she saw me she said she'd had a real delirious time at that ball, a delightful, never-to-be-forgotten time, and, she added, modestly, that she had been quite a belle. A man under the same circumstances, though they had been of his own making, asked if he had enjoyed himself, would have replied emphatically and vulgarly: 'No, I didn't. I had a fierce time.'

"Why, I know of one lord of creation who told some friends that his honeymoon had been very tiresome, and of another who in bidding his host good-by after a yachting trip remarked that he had had a pleasant time, all things considered, but that water journeys were more or less of bores. Imagine a woman doing anything so tactless. Why, if it had been a girl instead of a man in the latter case, though she had been seasick for the entire two weeks, though the salt water and air had ruined her prettiest gowns, taken the curl out of her hair and the roses from her complexion, she would have staggered off the yacht declaring faintly that she'd had the time of her life, and that she'd like to go again to-morrow. That's the feminine idea of true politeness."—Baltimore News.

CARBOLIC ACID.

Means Sure Though Very Painful Death to Intending Suicids.

"The conclusion that carbolic acid is used so extensively now by persons contemplating suicide because it is cheap does not seem to be well grounded," said a well-known New Orleans physician to a Times-Democrat reporter. "I have observed that carbolic acid is more extensively used for the purposes of suicide now than any other drug, but the fact that it may be cheaper than morphine or laudanum has nothing to do with the case. I think I can give a reason that is better grounded, and no doubt it will account for the popularity of the drug with the persons who seek to destroy themselves. The cause of its use is, in my judgment, its certainty. When a person attempts to commit suicide they really want to die, for they are tired of the whole business. They want to make a sure job of it. There is nothing harder to bear than the odium which attaches to the person who has attempted suicide. Now, morphine, laudanum and the usual run of poison may be pumped out of the stomach. Antidotes may be given and the effects of he poison may be overcome in various ways. Friends may discover the thing in time to hurry one away in the ambulance to the hospital, where prompt action on the part of a physician will save the life of the patient. But if a dose of carbolic acid of sufficient magnitude is taken, it will do its deadly work before help can be given, and the patient usually dies in great agony. This is, in my judgment, why carbolic acid is now used as a means of suicide by so many persons. It means death, and it does not require long for the quietus to come, either."